

National Defence Act Amendment

proposition advanced by the minister in regard to adaptability to change must surely be a non sequitur. He says it is true because when a man has a common uniform his mind is open to change.

If the minister is talking about a defence force being more adaptable to change because of a common command structure, then I am prepared to concede that there may be some merit to his suggestion, but it does not necessarily follow as a matter of course that because a man has a common uniform and a common rank structure he will have any loyalty to the mass structure and will be more easily changed. I fail to see any merit in that argument put forward by the minister.

Let us now refer to the demands of modern warfare. How on earth could those demands be met more satisfactorily by a man in a common uniform operating under a common rank structure? The minister is not asking for a common command structure or common field commands by this legislation. We are talking about joint or combined service headquarters. The demands of modern warfare are continually changing and there is continuing change in the operations of our land, sea and air components. There is no basis in reason for the suggestion that because all servicemen wear one uniform there will be greater co-operation.

Another strange argument put forward by the minister is that because a man in the air force, army or navy has a loyalty to that particular service he will allow that loyalty to override his objective analysis of the greater requirements of weapons, strategy and so forth. What is suggested is that there may be some ingrained selfishness, preference or prejudice toward one service. Let me suggest to the minister that he has entirely overlooked the feeling, philosophy and the attitude of the fighting man. The minister has been surrounded by people at the command level and has failed to understand that morale, tradition and loyalty to one's regiment have some meaning, although he may have paid lip service to this fact in his statement. He has suggested that this can all be wiped out and that some sort of higher loyalty to the Canadian Armed Forces can be developed.

The word "Royal" is being dropped, but a strange situation will develop if and when we again use it in the new name because again we will have "R.C.A.F.". Perhaps as a former member of Her Majesty's armed

[Mr. Lambert.]

forces I might as an ex-soldier feel that there is some plot here, although I am sure that members of the R.C.A.F. would insist that they would not participate in such a scheme and that there would be nothing equivocal about such a move.

A great number of my colleagues wish to speak on this bill and there are only one or two other points I should like to raise. The minister did say something in an effort to assuage certain fears about the continuing use of ranks. He stated that under certain conditions warrant officers and other ranks could continue to use those ranks. That will apply only until these men are promoted because the rank structure of the navy and air force will be wiped out. An individual will never be able to move from lieutenant commander to commander because the rank of commander will no longer exist. He will only be able to maintain that rank until he is promoted. Unless the minister suggests that the regulations will provide otherwise, that rank appellation will continue for perhaps a generation.

● (5:30 p.m.)

The minister has undertaken that no member of the forces today will be called upon to serve in some other branch or role than that in which he is presently engaged except in an emergency. In other words, one cannot convert a seaman into a soldier except in the case of an emergency. I ask this question: When would they be called upon except in an emergency? I admit that on a parade square you would not expect to suddenly convert an airman or a sailor into a soldier but where the difficulty comes—and this is what the services are concerned about—is that you will take soldiers and put them on a ship, when there is a solemn undertaking not to do this, because the bill says "except in an emergency". Every time out it would be deemed to be an emergency if there was such a requirement.

There is a further point. I refer to the integration of the service bases. I contend that it is quite illegal for the minister to have carried this out. He has presented it to this house, the armed services and the country as a *fait accompli*, in the same way as I found the phrase "Canadian forces" in a bill that came here from the Senate after being passed there.

Mr. Hellyer: It is in the present act.

Mr. Lambert: It is in Bill S-50 which deals with the rights, obligations and what have